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Review of the Work

OF THE

American Society for the Extension of University Teaching

FOR THE FOUR YEARS

1891-1894

BY

EDMUND J. JAMES

President of the Society

PHILADELPHIA

1895

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Author
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*To the Board of Directors of the American Society for the Extension
of University Teaching, Philadelphia.*

GENTLEMEN :

One year ago last June I submitted to you my resignation as President of the American Society for the Extension of University Teaching. You declined to consider it at that time and I did not feel that under the circumstances I could fairly insist upon its acceptance.

In again submitting my resignation as president of your society, to take effect at the end of this academic year, it may not be out of place to glance briefly at the work accomplished by our association since its organization.

A little over four years ago, in November, 1890, the first courses of University Extension lectures were given under your auspices. The work had been planned and inaugurated by my predecessor, Dr. William Pepper, to whose foresight in planning and self-sacrificing attention to details, the initial success was largely due. The society was fortunate, moreover, in having in Mr. George Henderson a secretary whose devotion to the cause from its very inception was a leading element in the early success of its work.

You invited me to become president of the society in April, 1891, and when I accepted this position, with the consent of the Board of Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania, I found an organization which had achieved a remarkable success for the short time in which it had been at work. My task was chiefly that of perfecting details and giving as far as possible a character of permanence to a movement, which many feared was only to prove a short-lived outburst of enthusiasm.

The Number of Courses.

This natural fear has been dissipated by the results. The history of your society has been that of slow and steady growth with no sign, at present, of any retrograde movement. The following table shows the number of lecture courses given under the auspices of your society from November, 1890, to December, 1894 :—

Calendar Year.	Number of Courses.
1890 (two months)	7
1891	87
1892	105
1893	111
1894	135

It will be seen that each year has marked a steady advance upon the preceding, and it is significant that the last year, 1894, not only exceeds any preceding year in the absolute number of courses given, but also that its percentage of increase over the preceding is the highest. This fact becomes of increased importance in forecasting

the future of this work when you consider the circumstance that the year 1894 was one of unusual business depression, during which educational and reformatory movements in general suffered severely.

It is also gratifying to note that the number of lecture courses thus far given in 1895 exceeds the number given in the like period of any preceding year.

Summer Meetings.

In addition to these systematic courses of lectures conducted according to Extension methods, two Summer Meetings have been held, at which a large number of courses was given to students from our centres, and others who chose to attend. These meetings have not only been valuable and helpful in themselves, but they have put new life and vigor into the whole Extension work, aiding us materially in setting higher standards of continuous and graded study.

A considerable number of class courses has also been given which should not be neglected in any account of the instruction work of the society.

Publications.

The work of your organization, however, is not by any means to be measured by the mere number of lecture or class courses given under its auspices. The various publications which you have issued have not only aided in your immediate instruction work but have also contributed to arouse public interest in University Extension throughout the country, and assisted materially in directing this public interest along fruitful lines. Through them your experience has been made available for the benefit of people and communities too far removed from the centre of your work to be immediately connected with your office. It is not too much to say that University Extension in every State of the Union has derived assistance directly or indirectly from the efforts of your society. The two National Conferences held in Philadelphia and devoted to the discussion of University Extension topics, certainly accomplished valuable results for the movement, and the report of the first conference, which was subsequently printed, has been a useful source of information to all people interested in the prosecution of this work in the United States.

The "University Extension Hand-book," edited by your former secretary, Dr. George F. James, and the various issues of your Journal and Bulletin, have proved of great assistance to individuals and communities who are interested in knowing of the best plans by which work can be done.

Geographical Distribution.

The lecture instruction work starting from Philadelphia and its suburbs, has extended to distant localities. The society has made it a rule to respond to the actual calls for aid so far as it could do so with due regard to the interests of nearer centres. The action and interaction of local and outside centres upon each other has been of

unmistakable aid to the progress of the cause. Since the society was organized one or more centres have been established in forty-five of the sixty-seven counties in the State of Pennsylvania, and lecture courses have been held under its auspices in no less than eleven other States, namely, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, West Virginia, Ohio, and Louisiana. Wherever these courses have been given, besides accomplishing their immediate educational end, they have served to create an interest in the general work of University Extension, the effects of which will not soon disappear.

Attendance.

The number of people who have come under the direct influence of your University Extension work has steadily increased with the increase in the number of courses. It has not been possible to obtain absolutely accurate statistics as to the attendance of the various lecture courses, but upon the basis of the evidence which we have in the office, it is safe to say that each course of six lectures has been attended by at least 150 persons. This will indicate that over 13,000 people attended courses given by the society during the year 1891, and that this number gradually rose to over 20,000 during the past year.

Social Classes Reached.

University Extension is for all classes of people—rich and poor, employe and employer, laborer and capitalist, men and women, educated and uneducated. It was natural that it should first appeal to those who by education and leisure were enabled to appreciate its advantages most quickly. These were, as would be expected in such a society as ours, the women, and in the first instance, women of leisure.

Year by year the circle has widened and appreciable progress has been made in the direction of interesting in the work other classes, including teachers, clerks, business men, mechanics and factory operatives. To reach the last mentioned class must be a slow process at best. It can be done only as a result of interesting other classes better able financially to assume the initial expense of developing and establishing this method of instruction. When it is once firmly established in a community for one class of society, means will be found of enlarging its scope and usefulness so as to include all. The friends of Extension can certainly not be satisfied with anything less than this.

Financial Aspects.

On its financial side the work has steadily tended to become self-supporting. It is not believed that University Extension work, any more than any other form of high, educational service, can be carried on in such a way as to dispense with the contributions of public

spirited citizens to aid in its prosecution, but the experience of the society has demonstrated the fact that a continually increasing sum, both absolutely and relatively, can be obtained from the communities themselves in which University Extension is prosecuted, and from the people who most immediately profit by its work.

Guarantee Fund.

A number of public-spirited citizens of Philadelphia subscribed four years ago to a guarantee fund to be drawn upon to pay actual deficits existing at the end of the year. The following table shows the total value of guarantee fund and the amount called, for each year, from 1891 to 1894:

Years.	Total Value of Guarantee Fund.	Percentage Called for.	Amount Realized.
1891	\$7,433.00	95%	\$7,061.35
1892	7,575.00	80%	6,058.40
1893	6,688.00	75%	5,016.00
1894	6,660.00	70%	4,662.00

It will be seen that the percentage called for has steadily declined from 95 per cent the first year to 70 per cent the fourth year. As the guarantee fund itself, after 1892, decreased at the same time, owing to deaths among the guarantors, and to the fact that some subscriptions were only for one year, the total sum called was still less than would appear from the percentage, falling from \$7061.35 to \$4662 in 1894.

This smaller call on the guarantee fund was rendered possible, partly by increased economy in the work of the society, and partly by special subscriptions, either by the guarantors themselves, for the purpose of enabling the society to diminish the call on the guarantee fund, or by others who were interested in the work.

While the call on the guarantee fund was thus being diminished the work itself was constantly expanding, as stated above, so that a continually larger share of the total burden was being carried by the beneficiaries themselves.

The Work Largely Self-Supporting.

Thus, during the last year, if we count those expenses of the local centres which do not appear on our books, the total cost of the work carried on under your auspices exceeded \$43,000, while the call on the guarantee fund was considerably less than \$5000, showing, that for every dollar obtained from the guarantee fund, eight more were obtained by special subscriptions, membership fees, sale of tickets, syllabi, etc. If we add to the \$4662—called from the guarantee fund, the \$1551.25 from special subscriptions by guarantors and others, that portion of the expenses which had to be raised by subscription, in the larger sense of the term, will still be only a little over \$6000, out of a total expense of nearly \$44,000, or about 14 per cent. If we add to that sum the money received from membership

fees in the society, for which some return is made to the subscribers, and which do not, therefore, really belong under the same head, the total income from benevolent sources, in the largest sense, for your work for the year 1894, amounted to \$8353, or less than 20 per cent of the total expense of the work.

It is not believed that any educational undertaking of high character and not technical or professional can make a better financial showing than this. Certainly no properly equipped college or university can make nearly so good a showing. More than half the expense of many of our leading colleges and universities is defrayed from the income of endowments or from special subscriptions, and in some cases at least 80 per cent of the total expense is thus provided for.

Experience has surely borne out the announcement with which you began this work four years ago, "that it would, in all probability, be largely self-supporting."

Co-operating Institutions.

In the prosecution of this work the society has been under deep obligations to the many professors in our higher schools and colleges who have given liberally of their time and effort in order to aid this cause. Instructors from upwards of twenty universities and colleges have co-operated in one or another of the phases of our undertaking. Among these institutions may be mentioned the University of Pennsylvania, Princeton, Bryn Mawr, Haverford, Swarthmore, Franklin and Marshall, State College, Bucknell, Lehigh, Cornell, Columbia, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston University, Yale, Smith, Amherst, Wesleyan, Iowa and Wisconsin. To the co-operation of these men, and to their interest in, and devotion to, this work, we owe largely the successful outcome of our endeavors.

Similar Work Elsewhere.

You have, moreover, good reason to congratulate yourselves that whereas four years ago your society stood almost alone in this field, it now receives aid and comfort from the experience and efforts of many other centres; such as Brown University, the University of the State of New York, and many Western universities, especially the University of Chicago, which has given other universities an example they may well emulate. These centres were encouraged and stimulated to activity by our example, and by their success have encouraged and stimulated us to new efforts.

Future of the Work.

I had a warm belief in University Extension when I entered the work four years ago, and the experience gained in its prosecution has left me with a still firmer belief in its importance and feasibility. I congratulate you upon the results which you have already accomplished and still more, on the great opportunity which lies before



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you. University Extension is, I believe, destined to prove one of the greatest educational movements of the last quarter of this century. I consider it a high privilege to have been identified with its beginnings in the United States, and I sincerely regret that the pressure of other work which has the first claim on my attention does not permit me to continue my connection with it.

I lay down my office, which has been a delightful though an exceedingly onerous one, with the less reluctance because I feel that the administrative organization of your work is efficient for its purpose. You have in your present secretary, Dr. Edward T. Devine, a man whose personal character, whose educational experience and insight and whose absolute devotion to the cause of University Extension make him thoroughly worthy of your confidence in every respect.

I cannot pass over in this place without mention, the service of your staff lecturers to this cause, and especially that of Mr. Henry W. Rolfe, whose devotion to University Extension has been shown by his return to work after a long illness resulting from injuries received while engaged in lecturing for your society; as also those of Mr. Lyman P. Powell, who for two years has given us the best service of which he was capable. They entered the field when it took courage and faith to identify one's self with our undertaking, and we owe much to their unselfish and unwearied efforts to improve the educational character of our work.

Nor can I leave unmentioned the distinguished services rendered us by the representatives of the Oxford and Cambridge movements in England. The names of Roberts, Horseburgh, Sadler, McKinder, Collins, and especially of Moulton and Shaw, are sufficient to indicate our great debt of obligation. Without their aid we could hardly have accomplished our present results.

I desire to thank you, gentlemen, for the uniform courtesy and kindness which I have experienced from you throughout our intercourse. You have in your office force, in the small body of your staff lecturers, and in the many self-sacrificing instructors and professors of our colleges a body of coadjutors whose efforts combined with your own, cannot but carry University Extension to new triumphs and a wider usefulness.

PHILADELPHIA, *May 1, 1895.*

EDMUND J. JAMES.

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